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under these circumstances; although you were probably "inspired" to dictate the editorial by reading somewhere that "there is no international law." In my opinion, the five-page editorial proves nothing but your own shortcomings.

MAXWELL STEINHARDT.

NEW YORK CITY.

[If our esteemed and learned correspondent had read the article which he so severely criticizes, beyond the title, he would have known what it was about, and would not then have expended his energies so profligately in bethumping a man of straw of his own creation. As all other readers of THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW of course recognized, we in that article took for granted all the perfectly familiar principles, theories, contentions, truisms and what not of which our correspondent now reminds us, and gave our chief attention to urging the need of vindicating the integrity and validity of international law in spite of the flagrant violations of it with which this war is marked, so that it shall not be said that the consensus of the world's judgment, or the formal agreement of the great majority of nations, has been arbitrarily annulled by the act of a single belligerent. In our opinion an indispensable prerequisite to the conclusion of peace should be an acknowledgment by all the belligerents of the validity and authority of the Treaties of The Hague and other international conventions as they existed before the war, and a consequent acknowledgment that all violations of them were wrong and deserving of penalty. Nor can we concede that the taking of such a view argues any fatal "shortcomings" on the side of law and justice.—EDITOR.]

OUR FARMERS

SIR,—Your editorial in this month's REVIEW, entitled "Are Americans Poor Farmers," is one to make the judicious grieve. The fallacies of it pass so current everywhere in the metropolitan press, that it is small wonder that the man in the street believes that the American farmer is incompetent. The truth is that he is, taken as a whole, the most competent agriculturist in the world. Your errors are based on the assumption that, because the acre yield in Germany is greater than in this country, your hypothesis is proven. You should have investigated to ascertain which of the two nationalities produces the greatest yield per unit of producers. Had you done so you would have discovered that the American farmer produces three times as much per man employed as does the German. You advocate what you designate by that pretty term "intensive farming." That term implies the command of unlimited labor. Any farmer will put to rout your argument by demonstrating the fact that more labor than he now employs is impossible to obtain. This is why American farming is wholly "extensive"—scarcity of labor and its high price, as compared with European labor. So long as labor is both high priced and scarce just so long will extensive farming prevail in this country. Crowd one hundred million people into an area twice that of Texas and intensive farming would at once obtain. Scatter it over our present area and extensive farming would at once prevail. Why? Simply because, given those two elements you have presented conditions that will make the one or the other system profitable. So long as the extensive system is more profitable than the

intensive, so long will it be practised and no amount of preaching by ill informed editors, or presidents, will change the system. Systems, like laws, change only when the reasons for their existence cease.

The American farmer, considering the present supply and price of farm labor is practising correct systems of production, and is doing it as well as any other agriculturist in the world.

F. B. TIPRON.

SEWARD, NEBRASKA.

[There is doubtless much truth in what our correspondent says, and we certainly did not mean to say one word to the contrary. But our correspondent errs, as many other farmers do, in supposing "intensive farming" to mean simply the employing of more men, the doing of more work, and the spending of more money on the land. Some of the most successful "intensive farming" has been done with actually less labor and less outlay of capital. It involved such things as familiarity with the chemistry of soils, the kinds of soils and fertilizers needed for certain crops, and the principles of rotation of crops. It requires no more labor to plant potatoes where they will do well than where they will do ill. It costs no more to put on lime where it is needed and potash where it is needed, than to apply lime where potash is needed and potash where lime is needed. Of course, multitudes of farmers, like our correspondent, understand these principles and act upon them, to their profit. But it is a lamentable fact that other multitudes do not, but persist in the old happy-go-lucky way, and consequently get only half as much as they might from their land. This latter circumstance is the secret of the abandonment of so many farms in the eastern part of the country. We could cite notable examples of the rehabilitation of such farms through the application of scientific principles, with highly profitable results.—EDITOR.]